

1                   CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Chris Necaise,  
2 welcome.

3                   MS. NECAISE: Hi. My name is Chris  
4 Necaise. I'm an associate at Grand Casino, Gulfport,  
5 and please excuse my nervousness.

6                   I would like to thank the Commission for  
7 the opportunity to speak here today on something I  
8 feel very strongly about. That is the positive effect  
9 gaming has had on my life, as well as countless other  
10 lives on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

11                  When I first came to work for Grand  
12 Casino, Gulfport, I was a single parent on welfare.  
13 Back then when I looked to the future, it looked  
14 pretty bleak. Now when I look to the future, it seems  
15 brighter and much more secure.

16                  I now have a sense of self-confidence and  
17 self-worth that was missing for many years. No longer  
18 will I have to suffer the embarrassment of buying  
19 groceries with food stamps. No longer will I suffer  
20 the humiliation of trying to find a doctor for myself  
21 or my son who will accept Medicaid.

22                  Never again will my son have to suffer the

1 indignities of being sent home from the hospital too  
2 soon after surgery because he was a Medicaid patient.

3 I now make a livable wage, and I stress  
4 the word "livable." Oh, wait. I lost my place.

5 I have medical and dental insurance for  
6 both myself and my son, and I also have a retirement  
7 fund. We now enjoy a much better standard of living.  
8 I've been able to build a nice, comfortable home for  
9 my family. I have dependable transportation now. I  
10 can even afford to take a vacation once in a while and  
11 enjoy some of the fun things in life instead of just  
12 barely surviving.

13 Most importantly, I don't worry so much  
14 about my son's future. I can give to my son so much  
15 more now than I could four and a half years ago. I'm  
16 not talking so much about the material things as I am  
17 about the things that a mother gives a child from her  
18 heart, that sense of worth and self-pride.

19 And Grand Casinos has given me that  
20 opportunity. I've been able to take numerous training  
21 classes offered by Grand Casino, such as computer  
22 classes, supervisory skills, and personal success

1 skills.

2           In the near future I'm going back to  
3 college to take classes under our tuition  
4 reimbursement program, and for the first time in many  
5 years thousands of people of the Mississippi Gulf  
6 Coast -- oh, no, no, no, I lost my other page -- have  
7 the opportunity for a much better life style than most  
8 could ever have imagined for themselves or their  
9 families.

10           Five or six years ago when you looked  
11 around, you saw a community that stagnated, kind of  
12 dead in the water. Now when you look around, you see  
13 the boom and bustle of growth and opportunity, and I  
14 would like to take this opportunity to extend an  
15 invitation to the committee to visit the Mississippi  
16 Gulf Coast to see that boom and bustle for yourselves.  
17 You'll see hundreds, if not thousands, of people just  
18 like me whose lives have been changed for the better.

19           Thank you.

20           CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Chris, thank you, and  
21 you did an excellent job.

22           MS. NECAISE: Well, I'm still shaking.

1                   CHAIRPERSON JAMES: That's okay.

2                   Jim, and, Jim, how do you pronounce your  
3 last name?

4                   MR. FARBER: It's Farber.

5                   CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Farber. That's a B.  
6 Okay. Thank you.

7                   MR. FARBER: Yes. Madame Chairman,  
8 Commissioners, my name is James Farber, and I'm a  
9 casino game supervisor at Harrah's Casino in Atlantic  
10 City.

11                   I appreciate the chance to make known my  
12 feelings on how the opportunities presented by the  
13 casino business has profoundly changed my life.

14                   I was born into a lower middle class  
15 family in a small town in northeastern Pennsylvania.  
16 Unable to afford a college education, I took the only  
17 employment that I could find and went to work in a  
18 local factory. Working conditions were less than  
19 ideal. I worked in an underground room with no  
20 windows, no air conditioning, and poor ventilation.  
21 The heat in the room regularly exceeded 90 degrees and  
22 I had to breathe chemicals all day long.